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THE EDUCATION OF THE LOWER CLASSES CONDUCTIVE TO MORALITY AND GOOD ORDER.

An epocha is now begun, in which the human mind has taken wing towards a nobler flight than it ever attempted before, and the change which it promises forebodes the greatest consequences. The diffusion of knowledge among men of every rank is now becoming so general, that, in half a century, the lowest classes of society will contain a larger proportion of men who will be able to reason soundly, than, four centuries ago, could have been reckoned in the highest; and modern cottagers will soon be better instructed than feudal chieftains ever were.

Yet there are who view this dissemination of instruction with apprehension, and suppose that it will turn the minds of artizans and labourers from their necessary employments.—Neither does a comparison between the happiness and misery, the morality and vice, of the instructed and uninstructed districts at home and abroad—a comparison so much in favour of the former—destroy the prejudice.

The inconveniences of all that is new are sometimes the first effects that are felt, and the most powerful instruments are those which must be used with the greatest skill. That the novelty of instruction may give some inexperienced minds exaggerated notions of their own importance, can easily be imagined; but a habit of knowledge will dispel these effects. In the dead of night men grope about as they can, and avoid danger by chance or dexterity. When on a sudden day appears they are almost blinded by it, but the hour of noon shows every thing as it is.

But let it be supposed that insurrection and idleness were the themes inculcated to-day, would not the hunger of to-morrow correct them? Let the husbandman throw away his plough—the weaver his loom—the shoemaker his last—would not the ills which these men would immediately experience force them back to their occupations? If imagination were to triumph for a time, and folly to usurp the place of truth, the drudgery of life in these necessitous regions would soon

bring back reason. Practice has shown that equality is a vision, and indefinite liberty the worst of tyrannies; and sound instruction, which is but the record of practice, will teach men to avoid them. The result of education to the poor will be, to teach them that there are moral hardships in this world, his share in which it is the duty of every man to endure.—*Cheniviz on National Character.*

THE POETS ACCOMPANIMENT.

FOR THE DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL.

For my music I demand
Finger raised of moving hand,
Bowing head, and lips comprest,
That murmur not, though scarce at rest,
And, with every varied rhyme,
Mark the thought, and mete the time.
Forehead, which the tender vein
With a violet streak doth stain,
Shaded by the brown lock's maze,—
For my spell forbids to raise
The white hand, that would repress
And reprove each truant tress,
Lest it break the deep suspense
Of delighted thought intense.
O'er that snowy forehead flit
Gleams that do illumine it,
Swift they come, and swift they flee,
Felt by her, and felt by me,
Fain, methinks, would they repose
On that bed of placid snows,
But must fly, like glancing thought,
For repose is suffered not.

I too challenge from thine eyes
Sympathy and sweet surprise;
Eyes that smile—because they must:
Yet the smile speaks half distrust;
Pleased—yet scarce easy in such pleasure,
With a too forward poet's measure.

A.

THE HOLESTONE, COUNTY OF ANTRIM.

On a rocky eminence in the townland of Ballyvernish, about one mile from the village of Doagh, stands a large whinstone slab, called the *Holestone*. This stone is upwards of five feet in height above the ground, and near the base six feet eight inches in circumference, and ten inches in thickness. At about three feet from the ground there is a round hole perforated through it, sufficient to admit a common-sized hand; it has evidently been made by art, but there is neither record nor tradition respecting the purpose for which it was erected, nor by whom.

About thirty years ago a man put his hand through the aperture of this stone, but was unable to extricate it; on which, those who were with him gave the alarm, and a crowd was soon collected, whose conflicting opinions only served to increase the fears of the person in limbo. Amongst those assembled, was a Mr. O—, a resident in the neighbourhood, who seeing so much needless alarm, determined to be a little waggish upon this occasion. "Fly," said he, to a bystander, "for my powder-horn, and I'll soon free him; I'll blow up the stone in an instant!" At these words, the confusion and alarm of the multitude beggars all description, while the cries of the prisoner, which had hitherto been sunk in the noise, became piercing in the extreme. During the confusion, the gentleman had sent off privately for some vinegar, and on the return of the messenger, with it, he began to pacify the prisoner, and to bathe his hand, which had become swelled in the various attempts made to get it extricated; and he at length succeeded in effecting his liberation, without application to the much dreaded powder horn.

The writer is not aware of any similar stone at present



in Ireland; but it is said that within memory, a large stone with a hole through it, stood on a hill, near Cushindall. In Ross-shire, Scotland, there is a stone exactly resembling the above; and near Kirkwall, Orkney, at a place called Stennis, is a large stone standing with a hole through it, said to have been a Druid's altar. The place where it stands is still deemed a place consecrated to the meeting of lovers; and when they join hands through the stone, the pledge of love and truth there given is sacred, and rarely, if ever, has it been broken.

Carriekfergus.

S. M.S.